



Wiehle Avenue and Reston Parkway Station Access Management Study

Reston Metrorail Access Group (RMAG)

Meeting Summary

June 26, 2007

Sign-in:

RMAG Members:

Fatemeh Allahdoust
Dave Edwards
Baba Freeman
Jim Larsen
Joe Leighton
Colin Mills
Mary Plunkett
Patty Nicoson
Kate Rudicille

Barbara Rovin

County Staff:

Keith Goodman
Merrily Pierce
Rick Stevens
County intern

VHB Staff:

Kim Lieberman
Frank Spielberg
Dalia Leven

Ram Jagannathan

The Perspectives Group Staff:

Kristie Bergeron-Hale
Paul LeValley

Members of the Public in Attendance:

Tim Donohue
Paula Poskon

Action Items:

- The Perspectives Group will add the contact information of the Reston Town Center Pedestrian/Bike Summit attendees to the RMAG's listserv
- VHB will continue working on the traffic simulation prior to the July 24th public meeting, and will be in touch with the RMAG via email with updates
- RMAG members should email Paul LeValley at plevalley@theperspectivesgroup.com to volunteer as table leaders for the public meeting on July 24th

Patty Nicoson called the meeting to order. Visitors and staff members from VHB and The Perspectives Group introduced themselves.

On behalf of Supervisor Catherine Hudgins, Merrily Pierce provided the group with a summary of the results of the Reston Town Center Pedestrian/Bike Summit held on May 30, 2007. The purpose of the Summit was to identify pedestrian and bicycle safety and access concerns within the boundaries of Reston Town Center in cooperation with the ongoing RMAG process. Another goal of the Summit was to develop the next steps including short- and long-term priorities. Many of the Fairfax County staff and the RMAG had attended the summit.

Merrily said that the majority of participants were residents of the Reston Town Center (RTC), and that they were enthusiastic about staying involved in the process of improving pedestrian/bike facilities in the RTC. They would like to participate as part of the RMAG, which has a Pedestrian/Bike Subcommittee. The list of participants was included in the summary handout, and may be used for future outreach efforts.

A police officer at the summit presented a map showing the accident prone areas of Town Center. Barbara Rovin told the group that many people at the summit were surprised that pedestrians don't automatically have the right-of-way in intersections, and also stated that there needs to be more of an effort by the County to inform the public about these laws.

Fatemeh discussed a possible change in the laws from a yield for pedestrians, to a stop for pedestrians. Some legislators believe the law is clear as is, so there is some push back. Fatemeh and her team at VDOT have discussed several options for how to clarify things. One possibility would be to require drivers to stop for pedestrians in any road with a speed limit of less than 35 MPH. An effort would also have to be made to inform pedestrians of these new laws. New legislation would not happen until the next session, and Fatemeh will share the information when it becomes available. It will also be posted on the RMAG website.

The small issue groups formed at the May meeting to discuss Transit, Roadway, and Bike/Ped issues reported out to the large group. Dave Edwards reported for the Roadway group, Patty Nicoson reported for the Transit group, and Barbara Rovin reported for the Bike/Ped group. Written summaries of these results were provided to all RMAG members and public at the meeting, and will be posted to the RMAG website following the meeting.

Frank Spielberg presented a VISIM Simulation of traffic in the project area. Frank demonstrated the “Sketch-Up” software, and explained that VHB is currently developing it to be fairly realistic. People will be able to identify Reston landmarks and see how various improvements will look. Frank stressed that the simulation is a work in progress. The simulation showed a model of current traffic patterns. Data for the simulation was taken from VDOT traffic signal cameras and other various sources including video taken by VHB.

The RMAG felt that the simulation was not realistic in its current state. Frank explained that it portrayed the average traffic flow during one hour on an average morning. The RMAG felt that the traffic volume needed to be increased dramatically, and discussed specific traffic patterns at a number of intersections. It was agreed that if traffic patterns weren’t portrayed more accurately at the public meeting, then the public would balk at the simulation. It was suggested that a 15-minute average be used instead of a one-hour average. Frank assured the group that he would work with his team by examining existing data, and collecting new data. Work will continue on the simulation at VHB, and communication will continue with the RMAG via email prior to the public meeting. Fatemeh suggested that a committee be formed to discuss Intelligent Transportation System (ITS), a set of standards that may apply to much of what the RMAG is discussing.

Paul LeValley reminded the RMAG that the second public meeting was scheduled for July 24th from 7-9PM at the Hyatt Regency Hotel, and that an invitation was included in the meeting materials. The meeting will be structured very similarly to the May RMAG meeting. The public will break into the three issue groups: Transit, Pedestrian/Bike, and Roadways. Paul asked for members of the corresponding RMAG subcommittees to volunteer as table leaders during the event to guide the public through the tasks. Paul will communicate with the RMAG via email to secure commitments from RMAG members.

Paul reminded the RMAG that the email address rmag@fairfaxcounty.gov was set up to receive any and all comments related to the project. Emailed comments will automatically be sent to Keith Goodman at the Fairfax County offices, and to Crystal Sarno at The Perspectives Group. All comments will be collected and given back to the RMAG for their review and consideration.

Post-meeting note: The email process for contacting the RMAG and the County Coordinator has changed. The email address RMAG@fairfaxcounty.gov is already receiving lots of spam, leaving the County computers open to possible viruses. From now on, anyone wishing to contact the RMAG should do so through the County website at http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/fcdot/sam_study.htm and clicking the “Contact RMAG” link. An email form will appear for the user to compose and send their message.

Upcoming Meetings:

The next public meeting will be held on July 24, 2007, at the Hyatt Regency Hotel, 1800 Presidents Street, in Reston from 7-9PM. The next meeting regular meeting of the RMAG will take place on September 25, 2007, at the North Government Center at 12000 Bowman Towne Drive in Reston at 7:00PM. The RMAG will not meet formally in August.